

LESSON 2: **Art Everyday—Artifacts!**

OBJECTIVES:

To understand that the Passamaquoddy people:

- keenly adapted to their changing environment.
- created everything they needed from the natural resources around them.
- crafted every-day items that were functional and showed artistry—creativity, imagination and skill.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE MAINE STATE LEARNING RESULTS: SOCIAL STUDIES:

History, Historical Inquiry, Analysis, and Interpretation

1. Formulate historical questions based on examination of primary and secondary sources including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams, and written texts.

OVERVIEW:

Students will investigate casts of archaeological artifacts. They will record their observations and answer historical questions to discover what the object can tell about the people that made and used it. Then, they will formulate their own historical questions about another artifact.



TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Artifact casts (See below: list of casts in **Artifact boxes**)
- *Reading an Artifact* worksheet
- *Artifact Catalogue*
- Pencils
- Notebook, journal or paper for final assessment

ARTIFACT CASTS: *see Artifact Catalogue if needed.* There are 23 artifacts in total.

Paleoindian fluted spear point
Paleoindian endscraper
Paleoindian sidescraper
Paleoindian perforator
Middle Archaic stemmed projectile point
Middle Archaic ground stone rod
Late Archaic ground stone plummet
Late Archaic stemmed spearpoint

Late Archaic ground stone spear point
Late Archaic ground stone stemmed spear point
Late Archaic ground stone gouge
Late Archaic ground stone adze
Fire-cracked rocks (set of 3)
Ceramic Period side-notched projectile point
Ceramic Period stone knife
Hammerstone

Ceramic Period rocker dentate stamped pottery sherd
Ceramic Period cord-wrapped stick pottery sherd
Ceramic Period linear incised pottery sherd
Ceramic Period small bone harpoon
Ceramic Period large bone harpoon
Ceramic Period bone flute
Bone awl

VOCABULARY

Artifact

Any object made, or modified and used by people.

Natural resources

Materials supplied by nature.

Technology

The body of knowledge available to a society that is of use in fashioning implements, practicing manual arts and skills, and extracting or collecting materials.

Projectile point

A general term for the stone or bone points on darts, spears, or arrows; often mistakenly termed "arrowheads."

Artistry

The superior artistic ability that is attained by study, practice and observation.

PREPARATION:

1. Unpack all artifact casts.
2. Locate artifact catalogue for teacher use.
3. Divide artifacts into 2 groups—one set for use in the lesson and one set for use in the assessment. It does not matter which artifacts you choose for the lesson and which you choose for the assessment. However, you may want to include the projectile points (arrow and spearheads) with the artifacts for the lesson rather than with the artifacts for the assessment. Although most students recognize “arrowheads” and “spearheads” (and therefore may want to choose them to research), challenge your students to learn through observation about their *differences* in style, shape, use and method of manufacture.
4. Put aside the artifacts for the assessment. (If you choose not to do the assessment, use all the artifacts for the lesson.)
5. *Reading An Artifact*: Reproduce double-sided copies of the worksheet, one for each pair of students.

INTRODUCTION:

Archaeologists want to learn how people once lived. Archaeology, the science of studying past people through the materials they left behind—artifacts—is one way of understanding the past.

An artifact is anything made or modified and used by people. Artifacts are not just “old things.” A shoe is an artifact—someone made it and someone is using it! A building is an artifact—someone made it. A stone arrowhead is an artifact—someone made it. A lot can be learned about people by looking at the things they make or use. That’s why archaeologists study artifacts—to understand how people once lived.

Long ago, there were no supermarkets, clothing stores or apartment buildings, so people made everything they needed to live their daily lives from the natural resources around them. Natural resources are materials supplied by nature that can be used or changed to make things needed for people to survive. Examples of natural resources in the environment are water, trees, sand, lakes, ponds, fish, and the sun.

Before European Contact, Passamaquoddy people used only the natural resources in their environment to make tools, clothing, houses, toys, food, jewelry and anything else they needed. The functional objects people made for everyday use also showed creativity, imagination and skill. In many ways, these everyday objects combined art and function, like nicely decorated dinner plates, clothes, shoes—even modern-day homes.

Students will examine some archaeological artifacts to discover how the Passamaquoddy incorporated artistry—creativity, imagination and skill—into everyday objects long ago.

PROCEDURE:

1. Pair students.
2. Distribute *Reading An Artifact* worksheet to each pair of students.
3. Distribute one artifact cast to each pair of students. Explain that although these are plastic casts of real objects they are fragile. Students should imagine what material the original object would have been made from.
4. Students should work with their partner to answer the questions on the worksheet. This should take about 20 minutes.
5. When everyone is done, get the class into a circle and ask each pair to report briefly about the information they have observed about their artifact.
6. The teacher should use the *Artifact Catalogue* to explain “what an archaeologist would say” about each object.

WRAP UP:

1. Based on these artifacts, what different types of material are represented?
stone, animal bone and pottery
2. What types of materials are not represented by these artifacts?
Wood, animal skins and meat, glass and metal are not represented.
3. Why?
Maine’s acidic soil quickly and easily deteriorates wood and other organic objects. However, the calcium carbonate in shell middens (heaps of discarded clams shells that build up over time) causes the soil to become more basic, which preserves material like animal bone.

ASSESSMENT:

Using the artifacts in the second group, have students in pairs make observations and formulate three to five historical questions about a different artifact. Teachers can observe the students working and give them an individual score if needed.

TIMELINE CONNECTIONS: Add the following important dates to the timeline of Passamaquoddy history:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • 12,000 years ago | Glaciers Retreat from Maine |
| • 12,000-9,500 years ago | Paleoindian Period |
| • 9,500-3,000 years ago | Archaic Period |
| • 3,000-500 years ago | Ceramic Period |

EXTENSIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

“Exploring Wabanaki Technology,” page B-77, in The Wabanakis of Maine and the Maritimes.